

Purpose of Christian Life and Change in spiritual growth:

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Purpose of Christian Life?

In the Westminster Shorter Confession of 1674, the first question asks, “What is the chief end of man?” The answer is “Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.”

“...we will seek to live to the glory of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.” In short, we will seek to live to the glory of God.

The purpose of the Christian life is to glorify God, not to satisfy our whims and preferences. We are placed on this earth “to put God on display to the world,” said John McArthur. (Clingerpeel, 2005)

Leaning on Christ, by our confession of Him as our Saviour is the first positive step, that anybody can make, if they have not lived in the Light of God previously.

What part does change play in fulfilling our main goal?

Positive change helps us to live in the Light of God, by utilizing our natural and intangible traits, like love, hope, trust, forgiveness, patience, grace and more, as directed by God’s Word.

In doing so, we live a new kind of life, as we openly extend our Love to other people, as we reflect our own relationship with God. We bring them closer to Christ, by increasing their knowledge and belief of Him and their understanding of Christ’s Gift of Grace.

It is through Christ’s Gift of Grace (1 Cor 1:4-9), that we experience all the positive traits and gifts, in our lives.

From Swordsearcher, Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary tells us:

1Co 1:9

v1-9 All Christians are by baptism dedicated and devoted to Christ, and are under strict obligations to be holy. But in the true church of God are all who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, and who call upon him as God manifest in the flesh, for all the blessings of salvation; who acknowledge and obey him as their Lord, and as Lord of all; it includes no other persons. Christians are distinguished from the profane and atheists, that they dare not live without prayer; and they are distinguished from Jews and pagans, that they call on the name of Christ. Observe how often in these verses the apostle repeats the words, Our Lord Jesus Christ. He feared not to make too frequent or too honourable mention of him. To all who called upon Christ, the apostle gave his usual salutation, desiring, in their behalf, the pardoning mercy, sanctifying grace, and comforting peace of God, through Jesus Christ. Sinners can have no peace with God, nor any from him, but through Christ. He gives thanks for their conversion to the faith of Christ; **that grace was given them by Jesus Christ. They had been enriched by him with all spiritual gifts.** He speaks of utterance and knowledge. And where God has given these two gifts, he has given great power for usefulness. These were gifts of the Holy Ghost, by which God bore witness to the apostles. Those that wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, will be kept by him to the end; and those that are so, will be blameless in the day of Christ, made so by rich and free grace. How glorious are the hopes of such a privilege; to be kept by the power of Christ, from the power of our corruptions and Satan's temptations!

What changes in the process of spiritual growth?

No matter the order of our confession in Christ and God's Justification in us, the fact that these events occur set the stage for the start of our spiritual growth to evolve, through our Regeneration in Christ and the ongoing process of Sanctification.

If we accept that God initiates change in our lives and attitudes, then Justification likely occurs, BEFORE our confession of Christ as our Saviour.

So, as our spiritual growth progresses, we change from willingly sinful beings, into a less sinful person, guided by the Light of God, through Christ and the Holy Spirit, within us.

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How does this change happen?

Upon Justification and our confession in Christ, we immediately find our attitudes have changed from walking a sinful path, to a more narrow focus in the Light of God or Regeneration.

Also at that time, the completion of the Trinity in our lives is attained, by the installation of the Holy Spirit within us, to guide us through the many ongoing choices, that we must make in the sanctification process.

Change – Briefly, how the process works for us: As sinners, we deserve death (Ro 6:23), but in confessing our faith in Christ, the New Christian has his sins pardoned of all sins by God, as part of being reconciled to God.

Justification is God's action through Christ for all those, who believe in Him. So, our part in justification is our belief and building of our Faith in Christ, as Our Saviour. Whilst our salvation is solely by Faith (through Grace), in both Scripture and Jesus Christ, justification indicates complete acceptance and forgiveness of the sinner, as God has fully forgiven this person.

Again, only by Faith in Jesus Christ, can we seek redemption from our sin, granted by God Himself, as justification. **(Ro 1:17; 3:25-26; 4:20,22; Php 3:8-11; Ga 2:16).**

Evidence of justification may be seen in the Regeneration/Sanctification of the New Christian, in the form of lasting personal change, growth and good works emanating from God's act of justification and the human's efforts in sanctification.

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Regeneration is the rebirth of man, walking in the Light of Christ, Immediately after God's justification and ingress of the Holy Spirit, as a guide in prayer, worship, community works and love for Christ and fellow man.

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Sanctification is the work of ongoing change in man by virtue of the Holy Spirit, where man's spiritual growth becomes more Christ-like as time moves on, leaning towards more righteous living. This is a continual change working in man, through God's Grace, cleansing him of sin and promoting Christ's Love, Hope, Forgiveness and other desirable traits, in him.

As man's spiritual growth progresses with change, sinful behaviour is gradually restrained and destroyed, making sanctification the catalyst of real transformation. Sanctification is growth in man, by God's Will and Grace, through the work of the Holy Spirit. **(Phil 2:12-13)**

In the journey of Sanctification, our human endeavours are guided by both Scripture and the dynamic Holy Spirit, with the believer is now walking along life's path, in the Light of Christ, avoiding his old sins.

This a daily battle with sin is fought on two fronts, with one having human traits and the other front having the Divine Nature of God, working through the Holy Spirit it's a two-way street, where sanctification is something God does with our obedience, but it is also something we achieve with God's help.

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What is the evidence of such change in us?:

Paraphrasing Stanley (2006), we can see the evidence of change, as:
Upon sanctification, the Holy Spirit guides us through the choices, that we must make every day, in our efforts to stay on the narrow path, walking in the Light of God.

Matthew 7:13-14 speaks of the TWO choices, that we have in our lifestyle we can choose the wide gate or the narrow gate.

Many people prefer to venture down the broad path they find beyond the wide gate (Matt 7:13), because this route is easy and demands no commitment and encompasses all desires, habits and freedoms, that lead to all kinds of sin. Everything is acceptable on the broad path and it is crowded, with every race, colour and creed.

Evil and prosperity rule here, in the way of darkness and disappointment, as they are the principals of sin and men like the darkness of the wide path (John 3:19-20), but they DO NOT wish to hear TRUTH of God.

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In Matt 7:14, tells us that few people find the path beyond the narrow gate, where there's a place in the human heart for God, that cannot be replaced by ANY human activity.

On the narrow path, there is ONE God, ONE Saviour, ONE Faith, ONE way to walk and ONE way to die in the Light of God. It is here that we find peace, contentment and joy in our lives.

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God works in the lives of his children, with the Holy Spirit and the Light of Truth inside us, by eliminating many traits found on the wide path and instilling in us the capacity to do things, God's way.

Even though the narrow path is the road to heaven and the way of Wisdom, few will find it, as it demands FAITH, COMMITMENT, DISCIPLINE AND DETERMINATION to continue on God's chosen path for us.

In Galatians 5:13-16, we are told, that God sets us free from sin, but we are not to misuse our freedom, by causing problems for other people. Instead, we are to walk the narrow path, by keeping God's Law the Commandments.

John 3:3 tells us, that unless we are born again, we cannot walk on the narrow path, but if we listen to God and obey His Laws, then we will grow, as we walk along God's narrow path to heaven.

If we feast on the Word of the Living God, our commitment becomes stronger and we become the Light for others, that may help to bring them from the broad path, onto the narrow way to God.



By way of example, death visited our extended family again last week and we saw a father on his death-bed take comfort from one of his Christian daughters, who showed him the way back to Christ, allowing him to die in peace.

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In Summary:

Changes in our spiritual growth will very often reflect the choices, that we make in our lifestyle we can choose Satan's worldly and evil broad path or we can choose the less-travelled narrow path to the Kingdom of God.

Our choice of lifestyle is made easier, as the Holy Spirit lights up our understanding of Justification and Sanctification, then our spiritual growth through change, will be further strengthened by the salvation message of Christ, that we may be saved by grace, through faith.

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